

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USIA WASHDC

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FOR LENINGRAD FOR P&C

STATE FOR CU/EE, EUR/SOV

USIA FOR IEU

REQUEST CU/EE ALSO INFORM IREX

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJECT: 1976/77 GS/YF EXCHANGE

1. ALL GS/YF PARTICIPANTS AND FAMILY EXPECTED AUGUST 2 ARRIVED SAFELY IN MOSCOW, LENINGRAD WITH EXCEPTION OF LOGAN ROBINSON. REQUEST IREX ADVISE CONGEN LENINGRAD RE HIS REVISED TRAVEL PLANS SOONEST.

2. AIRPORT CLEARANCE IN LENINGRAD WENT OKAY BUT WITH MINOR IRRITATIONS SUCH AS CAREFUL SCRUTINY BY CUSTOMS OFFICIALS OF IREX BRIEFING BOOK. GRANTEES CLEARED AIRPORT CONTROLS QUICKLY, THOUGH. MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM CAUSED BY LATER ARRIVAL OF LGU INOTDEL REPS WITH BUS, TRUCK TO PICK UP SECOND ARRIVING GROUP. LGU REPS WERE EXPECTED AT 2130 AND FINALLY APPEARED AT 2230, AFTER CONGEN OFFICER HAD ALREADY ASSUMED THEY WERE NOT RETURNING AND HAD MADE EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONGEN TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO LGU. WHEN CONGEN OFFICER QUESTIONED LGU REPS ON THEIR TARDINESS, THEY REPLIED THEY ASSUMED GROUP WOULD BE LATE AND THAT THEY, TOO, COULD BE LATE

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WITHOUT CAUSING PROBLEMS AND THEN BRUSHED ASIDE HIS COMPLAINTS.

3. THOSE ARRIVING IN MOSCOW WERE FOR MOST PART NOT AS FORTUNATE, ALTHOUGH MGU REPS WERE WELL ORGANIZED WITH BUS ON HAND, PREPARED DOCUMENTS FOR ENTRY INTO DORM, TAXI VOUCHERS, ETC. FIRST GROUP OF FIVE ARRIVED ROUGHLY ON TIME AND THEY QUICKLY PROCESSED THROUGH, WERE LOADED IN CAB AND WERE OFF TO UNIVERSITY. THOSE WHO ARRIVED AROUND 1830 DID NOT CLEAR AIRPORT TILL 2300, HOWEVER. LARGE NUMBER OF ARRIVING FLIGHTS, SLOWNESS OF BAGGAGE SYSTEM, AND TOTALLY UNCOOPERATIVE ATTITUDE ON PART OF CUSTOMS INSPECTORS MADE WAITS OF OVER TWO HOURS IN CUSTOMS INSPECTION LINES THE RULE. MOST OF THOSE ARRIVING AT 1830 WERE STILL IN LINE WHEN HOCH ARRIVE AT 2120. MGU REPS TRIED HARD TO GET CUSTOMS OFFICIALS TO PROCESS GROUP QUICKLY BUT IN END ONLY RANTING AT CHIEF CUSTOMS INSPECTOR BY EMBOFF GOT RESULTS. SEVERAL GRANTEES' EFFECTS WERE CAREFULLY SEARCHED. HERE, TOO, MGU REPS WERE HELPFUL IN CLARIFYING PERSON'S STATUS AND THEIR NEED TO BRING IN BOOKS, FILES, ETC.

4. BULK OF MGU GRANTEES REACHED ZONA V AT 2340 AND WERE BEING ASSISTED WHEN EMBOFF LEFT GROUP.

5. LAST YEAR'S ARRIVAL WENT BADLY BUT THIS YEAR'S WAS WORSE DUE AT LEAST IN PART TO INCREASED TOURIST TRAFFIC AT SHEREMTEYEVO AND TO FACT THAT THIS YEAR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN, WHO HAVE MORE LUGGAGE, ARRIVED TOGETHER WITH OTHERS. WE ARE NOW CONSIDERING WAYS TO IMPROVE HANDLING INCOMING GRANTEES NEXT YEAR AND WILL DISCUSS WITH IREX REPS DURING THEIR NEXT VISIT.
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